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CLARION REVIEW ★★☆☆☆ PICTURE BOOKS

Rose's Jungle

Barbara Rogenmoser
Jan Michael Vincent Sy, illustrator
Xlibris
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Happy are the children of working parents who look forward to their daycare experiences. A day away from home is especially wonderful when it involves using imagination and creative play.

In exuberant verse, Barbara Rogenmoser tells the story of a little girl named Barbara who has a great day at a daycare center called Rose's Jungle. Barbara shouts, "Hooray! Hooray! / This is the day / I'm FINALLY here / At Rose's Jungle to play."

With her bangs, bobbed hair, and big brown eyes, Barbara resembles the popular television character Dora the Explorer. The enigmatic Rose is an old and wooden looking figure, who doesn't seem to have any interaction with the child's day.

Barbara waves good-bye to her rather tall, angular mother, who is dressed for work in a medical environment. Like most children eager to play, she dashes past Rose and out the back door into an imaginary jungle. "As I step out back / On the cobblestone path / I spot a bird splashing / Just taking a bath / Banana trees can also be found / I'm looking for monkeys / Just hanging around!"

Barbara runs and skips, imagining tigers and dragons. All too soon, Rose lets the child know that her mother will be returning to take her home. Blown kisses are exchanged as the visit ends.

The colorful illustrations by Jan Michael Vincent Sy capture the joy of the little girl as she explores her imaginary world. However, there is no explanation as to why the place is called Rose's Jungle, who Rose is, or why this particular backyard is such a stimulating place for creative play.

Another problem is that punctuation is missing at the end of sentences. Although preschoolers are not likely to read *Rose's Jungle* themselves, correct punctuation is important in children's books.

Nonetheless, Barbara's happiness and her ability to make the most of her day may help stimulate parent-child discussion about making the most of a youngster's time at school or in daycare.

LINDA SALISBURY (February 17, 2012)

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